

## Environment and rural affairs lookahead next six months

The next six months currently look to be a frustrating time for the Environment and Rural Affairs sector, with few concrete dates set out for the publication of any of DEFRA's much anticipated draft Bills. The Fisheries Bill has been delayed yet again, and we are now anticipating it in "the first half of the year", before Parliament's Summer Recess in July. For this to be the case we would ideally hope to see a response from the Government consultation soon. The Agriculture Bill is now anticipated by the end of the year, and so could well be an early Christmas present from DEFRA. The Environment Act, and presumably the establishment of a new regulatory body, a consultation for which was announced on 10/5/2018, has now been given a time frame for the new year, after the Queen's Speech in 2019.

The Government's Health and Harmony: the future for food, farming and the environment in a Green Brexit consultation closed a few days ago (8/5/18), and the Government response to this will hopefully provide an accurate sketch of the content of the future Agriculture paper and the future of the British farming industry. The consultation has received a great number of responses, over 44,000 responses from stakeholders from a great number of backgrounds keen to influence the Government's categorisation of "public goods". With such a great deal of responses however, it is doubtful we will be seeing the Government's response until Autumn. Many of the Government's smaller consultations have been closed for a short time now, such as banning the use of electronic training collars for cats and dogs, and so the Government response will hopefully be forthcoming in the next couple of months, and we may see them before the summer recess. Unfortunately, with no real timescales laid out by Gove as yet, being able to pin these down to a more accurate timeframe remains impossible.



With the best intentions of sketching out some semblance of DEFRA's thoughts on policy, it seems likely that Gove will use these consultations to introduce moderate changes to current legislation. Ministerial talk in the House of Commons suggests that the Government is likely to introduce qualified measures, but stop short of a ban on live animal exports, as well as shock collars, with Gove already recognising the "valuable" nature of containment fences.

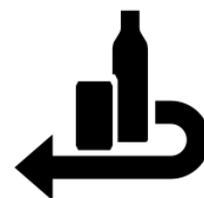
The nature of the topics touched on by rural affairs and the environment also allow us to cast our eyes over to MHCLG, The Home Office, and most importantly DIT, with both Fox and Gove saying contradicting things on the content of future trade deals post leaving the European Union. The policies decided across these Departments and Ministries will have a profound and determining impact on the future of farming and the agricultural sector in the UK, and could radically change the countryside as we know it.

*Please find below a timeline of key dates in final half of the year*

### June 2018

**14th:** 5<sup>th</sup> World Congress and Expo on Green Energy

- 16th:** Labour Live – Jeremy Corbyn Speaks
- 17th:** 2018 Water, Environment, and Transport Conference
- 20th:** SEA Scotland 2018
- 20th:** Environmental Permitting: flood risk exclusions and exemptions consultation closes
- 21th:** 4<sup>th</sup> Premium Conference – Looking Back and Moving Forward
- 25th:** Economy, Sustainable Development & Energy International Conference
- 25th:** “She is Sustainable”
- 26th:** Beyond the Coast 2018
- 27th:** ENDS Natural Capital Conference
- 27th:** Greener UK: Parliamentary Farmer’s Market (Invite only)
- 28th:** EEN: Natural Capital Accounting For Urban Greenspace Management
- 28th:** European Council – Leaders’ summit
- TBC:** [Anticipated] Fisheries Bill



### July 2018

- TBC:** [Anticipated] Live animal exports government response
- TBC:** [Anticipated] Health and Harmony government response
- 5th:** WF&N Forum: Next steps for UK agriculture policy
- 5th:** Solid Wood Solutions Conference
- 10th:** WF&N Forum: Next steps in food packaging and waste in the UK
- 12th:** Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs Oral Questions
- 12th:** WEE&T Forum: Next steps for UK wind energy
- 14th:** Draft Clean Air Strategy Consultation closes
- 18th:** APPG On Climate Change: Greening Britain’s Infrastructure
- 19th:** WEE&T Forum: Priorities for improving UK air quality
- 9th:** Bi-Annual Scottish Fishing Conference
- 11th:** UK AD & Biogas and World Biogas Expo 2018

- 18th:** CIWEM: Diffuse Pollution: Evidence, Effective Practice & lessons...
- TBC:** [Anticipated] Government response to Water resources consultation
- 20th:** Parliament rises for summer recess
- 24th:** Non-road mobile machinery and red diesel call for evidence closes
- 27th:** The Game Fair 2018

### August 2018

- TBC:** [Anticipated] National Parks Review
- 2nd:** Environmental Principles and Governance after EU Exit Consultation closes
- 12th:** OS (ENG) For Red Grouse, Common Snipe, Golden Plover & Coot/Moorhen
- 14th:** Air Quality: draft Clean Air Strategy 2018 consultation closes
- 20th:** OS (ENG) For Black Grouse, Exc. Somerset, Devon & New Forest

### September 2018

- TBC:** [Anticipated] Reducing litter: Proportionate enforcement
- 1st:** OS (ENG) for Grey, Red-legged Partridge, Duck, & Goose
- 5th:** Parliament returns from Recess
- 14th:** Parliament rises for Conference Recess
- 15th:** Lib Dem Conference
- 23th:** Labour Party Annual Conference
- 30th:** Conservative Party Autumn Conference

### October 2018

- 1st:** OS (ENG) Pheasant & Woodcock
- TBC:** [Anticipated] Government response: Clean Air Strategy consultation
- 4th:** 5<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Climate Change
- 16th:** IMF 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

**TBC:** SNP Conference

**9th:** Parliament returns from Conference recess

**13th:** Welsh Lib Dem Conference

**18th:** European Council leaders' summit – target date to agree a withdrawal treaty. Accompanied by transition deal, a separate “political declaration”



### Winter 2018

**[TBC November]** [Anticipated] Government response: Air Quality Consultation

**[TBC November]** [Anticipated] Government response: Environmental Principles consultation

**6 Dec:** WEE&T Forum: Next steps for reducing plastic waste